



Indiana Adolescent Physical Activity

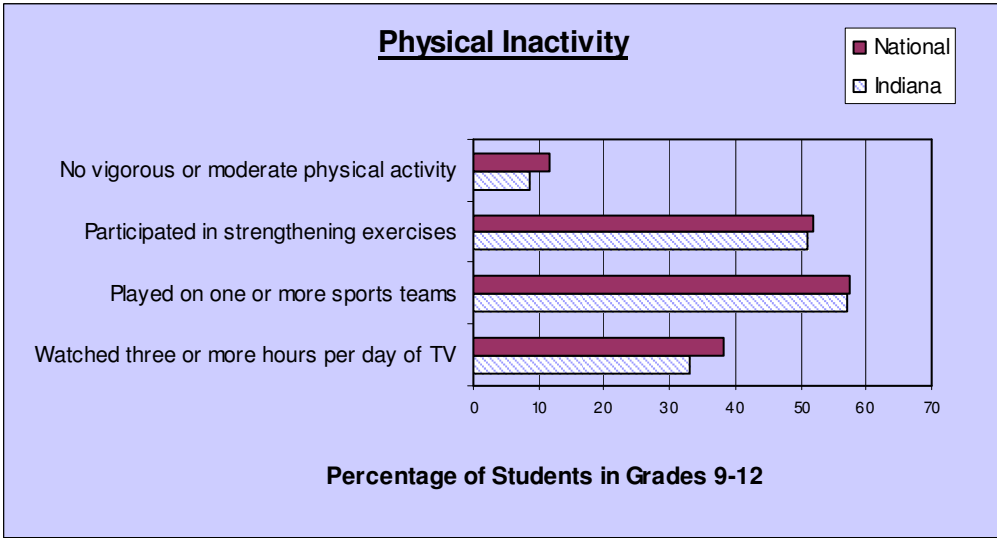
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, major deceases in physical activity occur in grades 9 to12, especially for females. By grade 11, more than half of female students are not participating regularly in vigorous physical activity.

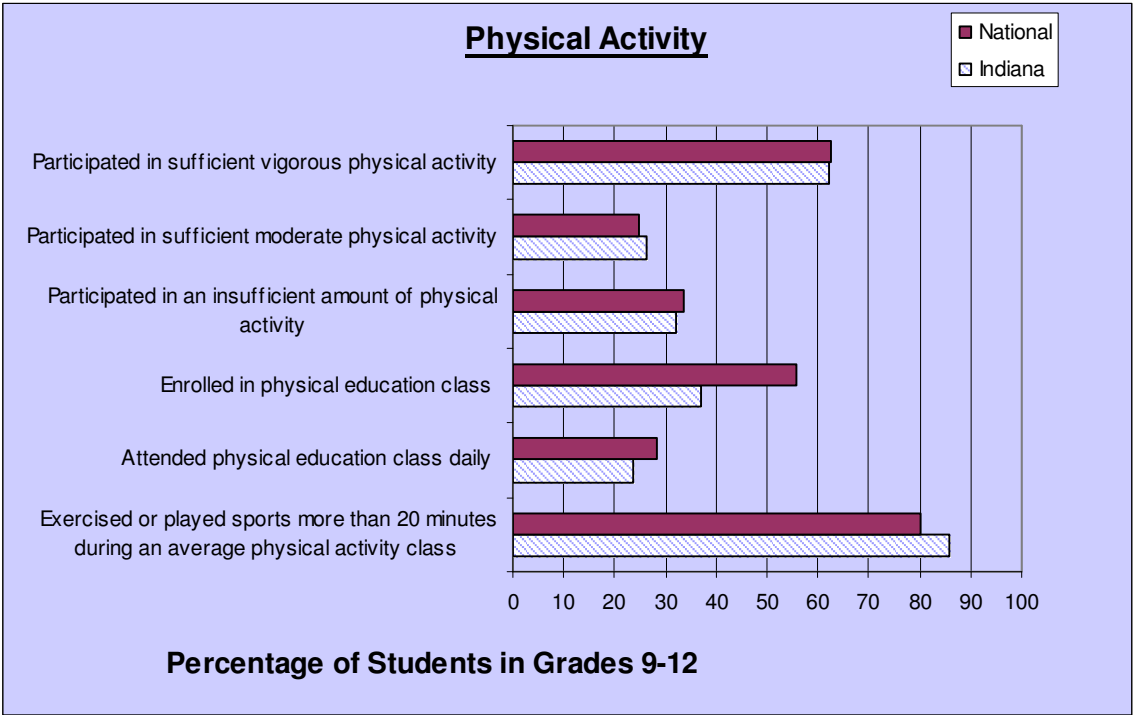
The CDC recommends that all adolescents should be physically active daily, or nearly every day, as part of play, games, sports, work, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise, in the context of family, school, and community activities. Adolescents should engage in three or more sessions per week of activities that last 20 minutes or more at a time and that require moderate to vigorous levels of exertion.

Health problems associated with lack of physical activity can include obesity, heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, arthritis-related disabilities, and some cancers. Inadequate physical activity is associated with needing more medication, visiting a physician more often, and being hospitalized more often.

The 2003 Indiana YRBS shows that 37.1 percent of students in the state were currently enrolled in a physical education class, and 8.6 percent of Indiana high school students said that they had participated in no vigorous or moderate physical activity in the previous seven days.

Following are graphs with data on physical activity among youth in Indiana and the United States:





Participation in regular physical activity helps to build and maintain healthy bones and muscles, control weight, build lean muscle, and reduce fat. Physical activity can also help lessen feelings of anxiety and depression and can help maintain a sense of well-being. In the long-term, regular physical activity can significantly reduce the chance of dying prematurely of diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer, and high blood pressure.

School physical education classes can increase adolescent participation in moderate to vigorous physical activity and help high school students develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to engage in lifelong physical activity.

The Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports promotes public and private efforts in health, fitness, and sports in order to encourage healthy lifestyles for youth. The Indiana State Department of Health is funding community-based activities to increase physical activity across the state during the summer of 2004. These projects include youth fitness camps, biking and walking challenges, increased access to safe recreational areas, and intergenerational organized walks.

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